The Seed Sower.

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The Ninth Paradise.

In the nine heavens are eight Paradises:
Where is the ninth one? In the human breast.
Only the blessed dwell in the Paradises;
But Blessedness dwells in the human breast.
Created creatures are in the Paradises;
The uncreated Maker in the breast.
Rather, O man, want those eight Paradises
Than be without the ninth one in thy breast.
Given to thee are those eight Paradises
When thou the ninth one hast within thy breast.

Feet and Wings.

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."—*Jesus.*

I watched the sparrows flitting here and there,
In quest of food about the miry street;
Such nameless fare as seemed to sparrows sweet
They sought with greedy clamour everywhere.

Yet 'mid their strife I noted with what care
They held upraised their fluttering pinions fleet;
They trod the mire with soiled and grimy feet,
But kept their wings unsullied in the air.

I, too, like thee, O sparrow, toil to gain
My scanty portion from life's sordid ways,—
Like thee, too, often hungry, I am fain
To strive with greed and envy all my days.
Would that I, too, like thee, might learn the grace
To keep my soul's uplifted wings from stain.

Puritanism.

A SERMON BY THE
REV. BERNARD SNELL, M.A.

"Hold fast your Puritan heritage;
But let the free thought of the age,
Its light and hope and sweetness add
To the stern faith the fathers had."
—*Whittier.*

"*Our fathers trusted in Thee, they trusted, and Thou didst deliver them.*"—Psalm xxii. 4.

"*Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.*"—Galatians v. 1.

All Englishmen are proud of their heritage in the great cathedrals of our land and find delight in visiting them; but usually, one has to pay the penalty of hearing about those desecrating vandals of Puritans, how they shivered the stained glass and shattered the statues. There is a nucleus of historic truth in some of the stories, but for the most part they are airy false-hoods begotten in the windy minds of the custodians of those fanes. Do you imagine that Puritanism was nothing more than iconoclasm gone mad? Of course in the rough work which our fathers had to perform in asserting the vassal's freedom and the poor man's right, in their protest against idolatry and their insistence

that *Man is more than Temples*, they were sometimes betrayed into an excess of zeal. But that protest did not exhaust Puritanism.

In reading stories about the Great War one is sure to find some snivelling hypocrite, harsh, unlovely and contemptible, who is made to serve as the portraiture of a Puritan. Do not imagine that to be a fair delineation of the men who established our political liberties. Such men could not have won a battle, much less have initiated a movement which has ever since constituted the central current of the stream of English life. Do you imagine that Puritanism was a mere hotch-potch of ignorance and fanaticism, boorishness and barbarism? Why, it was the child of the Renascence; its strength depended on the brave sincerity with which men recognized the claims of reason; no church ever more faithfully made the appeal to what is the truth, the veritable fact. Puritanism carried the Reformation forward to its legitimate issues. The Puritans were children of the most splendid intellectual epoch that England ever had, when the touch of light was kindled in great Eliza's spacious days. We owe to Puritanism all that is most picturesque in English thought and life of the 17th century. The greatest scholars and poets of the time were Puritans. Spenser was penetrated with the Puritan spirit. It is tolerably certain that Shakespeare had a Puritan training. Milton, "a man not second among those that lived," was a Puritan in the attitude of his mind and the texture of his character. Those "dull sectaries" were, in their truest and worthiest representatives, men inspired with the love of beauty and literature and art, men of the widest and noblest patriotism.

Do the justice of judging a system fairly. When we speak of the Greek spirit, we think of Pericles, of Socrates, of Plato; we do not judge Athens by her most degraded citizens. So when we speak of those who saved Old England and created New England, at least let us not judge them by their camp followers.

It girds one's soul to realize the things with which ignorance continues to make Puritanism synonym. Say, if you will, that they were a solemn, serious band of men. Well, only a waterfly of a creature fails to have sense of the deep seriousness of life. If life is not solemn to you, then pity 'tis 'tis so. This world—this "ball of anguish for ever spinning round before God, and the great hum of its misery going up to His ears"—is surely serious enough. Say, if you will, that our Puritan churches have nourished dour men of Spartan hardness, of grim sobriety, of poor humour, deficient in those graces and worldlinesses which make for the easy running of life. Living in the shadow of persecution does not tend to impart colour or grace or sweetness to life. Having to struggle for generations against cruel power in an inhospitable native land, it says much for their faith that they have been merely solemn and not full of hate, that they have been self-restrained and not bitter. People, whose fathers were put in the stocks and had their ears clipped for their conscientiousness are not apt to cultivate short memories. And when their critics stoop so low as to animadvert on their failure to cultivate the graces of scholarship, they are quick to remember that the predecessors of these self-same critics barred the ancient homes of learning to them as long as they dared.

The beliefs of Puritanism have passed away, or at least the forms of these beliefs have changed, and their philosophy of life is now judged inadequate, but the essential spirit of Puritanism remains. It must not be identified with a specific form of worship or set of doctrines. It was not a specific form of worship, for until 1662 there were more Puritans inside the Episcopal Church than outside. It was not a specific set of doctrines, for every one of their theological opinions was held substantially by their opponents as by themselves.

Puritanism was, as the name indicates, a certain spiritual and moral tone, a "faith beyond the forms of faith." A man may be zealous for all the doctrines of the first Independents without being a Puritan. A man may hold the creed that they renounced and belong as really to the Puritan stock as those who fought at Naseby and Marston Moor.

Puritanism is more abiding than any vestment of thought or method with which at any time it has been clothed. It is not dead. Cardinal Manning once said, "Cromwell is not dead, he is only sleeping: he may wake at any moment." There is iron in the blood of our countrymen which will not be found wanting in time of stress. Without a leaven of Puritanism our

civilisation would rot, our culture would dissolve our strength, our prosperity would but store up fuel for inevitable anarchism. What is the Puritan spirit?

I. That fear of God which is the beginning of wisdom. Read the biography of any Puritan and you will find that he was penetrated with the sense of Divine leadership: he believed that his life, so far as he was faithful, was the result of the impact of God's Spirit. He was convinced of the reality of spiritual forces. His religious thinking may have been narrow, but he was over-mastered by the nearness of God to his soul and he could do no other than make religion supreme. He may have held rigorous and unlovely conceptions of God, but at least it was a real God, a God that made him do his duty. It will do good to you who scarcely believe in God, but merely in "something very like Him," to remember that that man in difficulty consulted God, in victory thanked God, and in defeat sought for the lesson God would have him learn. So he became so strong that he was afraid of nothing, save of the wrath of God. I will admit all that you can say about the hard dry theology of these men, but it did lay on them the awful responsibility of holiness. Better the most desiccated theology, so that you win inspiration and impulse from it, than a liberalism that is powerless because invertebrate, a latitudinarianism without depth, a Pyrrhonism that thinks one opinion as good as any other opinion, an indifferentism that promotes not free thought but fatal thoughtlessness, and goes to the devil with a smile of vacancy. At least, the thought in which these men were nurtured was the mother of saints and heroes, who hated iniquity, broke tyrannies, wrought righteousness and achieved liberty.

We have learnt more clearly than they that "perfect love casteth out fear."—Yes, casts out the fear that trembles with dread of an almighty devil, but it does not cast out that fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom, that fear which is reverent in awe and humility before the Divine Majesty of holiness. That fear of the Lord will never pass away.

The liberalism of religion which denies that fear of God is foredoomed to disastrous failure. But by all that is reasonable I understand a liberal faith to be a faith that believes much and trusts nobly, not a faith that denies much and trusts little. The misery of it is that so many of us have let God drift out of our thoughts so that we care for nothing transcendent and commanding. The questions that came to great souls insisting on an answer stir us not. We are cynics towards the struggle by which the world has been thus far redeemed from ignorance and oppression; we deem "men's wrongs a phrase, men's rights a dream." A golden guinea will, for many, eclipse the incomparable pomp of eve. The skirts of a dancing girl move them more than the forlorn hopes of a people nobly struggling to be free. Kindled by no ideal, swept by no enthusiasm, they sit in the seat of the scornful. The history of heroic men, who lifted eyes to heaven "with a trust which the world could not shake, a pity which the world could not chill," does not arrest attention, nor the grandeur of great themes? prayer brings no joy, poetry gives no thrill of holy rapture. Even the life of Christ Himself does not bow the heart. They are spiritually atrophied.

Oh fellow-citizens, our life is lived under the pressure of self-interest, guided by the needle of frivolous pleasure. We look out on the poor through hard eyes, we have heard the death-scream of a nation with dull ears; our nobler instincts are asleep, brotherhood is paralyzed in the scepticism of the unwakened soul.

Deem me a Puritan born out of due time, still the truth holds—the life that does not register itself in fine endeavours after high deeds is nought, the soul can live only by the force of divine ideas. Listen to what one of our own poets has lately written:—

"I think the immortal servants of mankind,
Who from their graves watch by how slow degrees
The World-Soul greatens with the centuries,
Mourn most man's barren levity of mind,—
The ear to no grave harmonies inclined,
The witless thirst for false wit's worthless lees,
The laugh mistimed in tragic presences,
The eye to all majestic meanings blind.
O prophets, martyrs, saviours, *ye* are great,
All truth being great to you; ye deemed man more
Than a dull jest, God's *ennui* to amuse;
The world for you held purport. Life ye wore
Proudly, as kings their solemn robes of state,
And humbly, as the mightiest monarchs use."

—*William Watson, in the "Spectator."*

II. Simplicity of life. The danger to our nation lies in a vulgar luxury and in the craze of money-getting in order to command such luxury. It constitutes a danger not merely to the men and women who are the victims of it, but to the social organisation at large. Poor men are not exasperated by the fact of wealth in other hands, but by the misuse of that wealth while their own weans starve. The great body of the people are glad to see energy and frugality rewarded by prosperity, but the thing that stirs the hatred of the masses is shameless self-indulgence. That is the solvent of states, the most destructive of all the forces that have wrought havoc in communities. No lavish alms will serve as "ransom," no multitudinous charities will redeem the situation. Social hope lies in the restoration of simplicity as a principle of life.

And in what direction shall we look for the coming again of that simplicity save under the compulsion of religion pure and undefiled, Puritanism asserts that the one great fact in the world is *man*, his soul akin to the Spirit of the Supreme God. Differences of wealth and rank, of culture and condition, are as nothing; they but constitute the "persons" which God does not respect. The supreme thing in this planet is the soul of a man, by whose presence in the world this earth becomes a significant part of the universe. That is the inspiring principle of Puritan simplicity.

Of course I am aware that such a conviction includes democratic principles all round, in Religion and in Politics. Nor do I shrink from that conclusion. *All* Christian men are priests unto God, and all pseudo-priestism is high treason to the cause of man. *All* men are God's children, and our last loyalty is not to "thrones and crowns, but men." There has not been a solitary conflict for liberty and righteousness but our men have borne faithful witness for these principles. How could it be otherwise? To Puritanism is due the fact that Religion and Liberty are not dissevered in England. The training of our churches sets us on the progressive side, helps us to grasp great principles intelligently, gives us the sense of personal responsibility. In our councils the humblest are welcome; rich and poor have equal rights. The power of vote and voice in our churches is not bought for so much a year, it is neither household suffrage, nor pew suffrage; all who are allied in common discipleship and in Christian endeavour stand equal in our democratic constitution. There is a touch of idealism about that.

> "Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp,
> Or what's a heaven for?"

My belief is that the future of this nation lies in the hands of these free churches that nourish the spirit of Puritanism, if they are equal to their high calling, resolute and catholic and stalwart.

III. Loyalty to duty. The Greek spirit put the beautiful before the true, and the true before the good. The Puritan spirit puts the true before the beautiful, and the good before the true. So did our Lord Christ.

That is a truth thundered out by history: *First the Good.* I suppose that none will deny that to our English Puritans conduct was the supreme thing, righteousness the one law of life; to them the only damning heresy was the heresy of wickedness, the heresy of a lie in the right hand, the heresy of faith without faithfulness, of belief without life. Nothing contrary to the law of God was with their sanction permitted to live. Men of conviction are not conciliatory men perhaps; but there is power in such men, and they become the conscience of their time. The health of society depends on the presence in it of such men; for lack of a few righteous men Sodom was destroyed, and many another city of the past.

The stable welfare of this nation rests where the Puritan planted it—on the rock of conscience. *That* alone gives to human laws their justification, to human policy its lasting strength; and loyalty to it is the salt that preserves life from corruption. The curse that lies on much of our art and literature to-day is that beauty rather than right is made the source of inspiration; so many artists in words and in oils find the ethical note jar, and they affirm that earnestness introduces something alien to their rôle. Is there any intelligent student of history that does not recognise for all art need of the peremptory guidance of conscience? Said Tennyson, "They talk of art for art's sake; there is something higher, art for man's sake."

And the curse that lies on so much of our politics is that not a few have ceased to believe that righteousness alone exalteth a nation. It *was* believed in the days when our fathers stood in the breach with their unconquerable wills sworn servitors of right and liberty. Oh! for a few such stalwarts in our midst to-day. Their presence might produce an earthquake or two, but we should soon be rid of the political putridity that has fallen upon us through our all-consuming opportunism.

Sole safety is to be found in the old Puritan maxim that *nothing morally wrong can be politically right.* So it was phrased by John Bright, whom they called "The last of the Puritans." It is at root the Puritan position in public affairs, that God's will must be done; and until that will be done, nothing is done.

It may not always seem to be the prudent policy, it may even be an expensive policy, it may appear to disregard what are known as accomplished facts. "There are no accomplished facts. Right alone is perpetual. Facts cannot accomplish themselves. They remain conditional upon their accordance with Right." *(Victor Hugo.)*

He who believes that Righteousness is to dominate the earth and all that is in the earth belongs to the mystic communion of the Puritans, be he Quaker or Catholic, heretic or orthodox. The true sons of the Puritans are not they who write the epitaphs and encomiums of the heroes of the 17th century; but they who stand the conscience of *this* generation, they who move forwards against to-day's falsehoods and wrong in the same intrepid courage which they showed.

To be faithful with the faith of the fathers it may even be necessary to reject their conclusions. The faithfulness is all. As knowledge deepens and culture spreads, you cannot have "liberty of prophesying" without the risk that many opinions of former times will be revised and perhaps reversed. A religion that is alive and growing has prophets; a religion that has stopped growing has only scribes and priests Years ago at Strasburg, Colani said, "Protestantism is not the last note of the Reformed Church; it is the first note; it shows the direction in which the Church intends to travel." And Pastor Robinson declared that the Lord had yet more light to break forth from His Word.

"Darkling our great forefathers went
The first steps of the way;
'Twas but the dawning, yet to grow
Into the perfect day.
And grow it shall; our glorious sun
More fervid rays afford;
The Lord has yet more light and truth
To break forth from His Word."

Our Neighbours.

It is all very well for divines to tell us "to love our neighbours." If our "neighbours" lived in a tent pitched a hundred yards off under the next palm tree, with the prospect of striking and going further next week, or even if they lived in a detached villa, with a high wall between our respective gardens, we might find the exercise of the virtue within the limits of our moral powers. With a little exertion we can feel charitably towards the people who live on the other side of the street, though they do make "Punch" perform before their windows at least once a month; and when the family is out of town, the parties given by the housemaids are exceedingly distressing. But to ask us to love the people who are only divided from us by nine inches of porous brick—as romantic people always say at sea "with only a plank between us and destruction"—and whose cabs and carriages, knocker, bells, tradesmen's carts, children's perambulator, cook's chopping, carpenter's hammering, old gentleman poking the fire, young ladies screeching bravuras, and babies squalling in the nursery, are all so many perennial tortures and insults to us—to ask us to love *these* neighbours, is to require of human nature something exorbitant. He who can do it must be like that character mentioned by Shelley—but by nobody else—who

"—gave an enemy
His plank, then plunged aside to die."

Howard and Fénélon, and Mrs. Fry, and all those sort of people, could not hold a candle to him. We can only justify moralists in using such a wild hyperbole, on the ground that they wish to make a sort of high-tide mark, or what the lawyers call the jetsom line, of all human charity. He who, living at No. 10, Stucco Villas, can lay his hand on his heart and say he

loves the inhabitants of No. 9, and feels complacency towards the people who dwell in No. 11, that man has nothing more to learn from teachers of virtue. He is fit to pass muster before Rhadamanthus himself, and join the congenial society of those

> "Happy youths who died for love,
> Wandering in a myrtle grove."

The way in which neighbours can torment each other, if, like the young gentleman with the exquisite white tie, they "give the whole of their minds to it," is astonishing. Of course, if one party happens to be subject to bad headaches, or sleeplessness, or to have, like poor Mr. Babbage, any employment whereby he hopes to benefit the world by hard intellectual labour, then there is a grand field opened to you, as an amiable neighbour, by all the easy methods of encouraging organ-men, hammering at the partition-wall at 6 a.m., and thundering at the hall door at midnight; placing an harmonium on a level with your neighbour's study-table, so that the peculiarly excruciating grind of that instrument may thrill his legs through the floor; and always keeping your sick baby in the apartment next his bedroom. Again, if anything particularly deplorable happens in his family, of which your servants will be sure to give you the earliest notice, that is of course the moment to give a five o'clock party, and to fill the street with the carriages of your friends. Or, on the contrary, if his daughter is to be married, that is the day to seize for ordering home your annual supply of coals. You can easily arrange for sufficient carts and sacks to keep the whole pavement in a most desirable state for the passage of a party in bridal array. Nor are the mutual-annoyance powers of neighbours by any means limited to the actual houses in which they dwell together, we will not say precisely "in unity," but in propinquity. The possession of a bit of garden as large, we will suppose, as a fair-sized dinner-table, is a "hostage to fortune," and he who seeks peace should hesitate before he incurs the risk of it. Mrs. Nickleby's venerable lover courted her by throwing vegetable marrows over his wall at the feet of the fair object of his affections. But there are other things beside wholesome vegetables, and other sentiments besides those of respectful love, expressed sometimes by missives similarly delivered. Dead cats, bones, and broken crockery are not unknown, particularly to those who are so fondly trustful as to leave valuable plants and cap-glasses exposed to such attentions. Another of Dickens' heroines is described as for ever subject to the invasions of asses from the neighbouring common into her small domain, and rushing out every hour or two with a call to her maid—"Janet! Donkeys!" But the "peaceable ass" is a rare visitant in a suburban paradise. Cats are the ministering angels who habitually scratch up the flower-beds and break the lily stems; but their perfectly irrepressible depredations are small compared to those of a goat, which, it may be observed, is usually kept by some obliging neighbour if any small bit of grass be within sight, the tying of the goat being, naturally, not the concern of the owner, but of those whose shrubs he nibbles.

The real triumph of neighbourly animosity, however, happens when there is a gate anywhere through which the owners of two or more houses have right of way. Does No. 3 wish it kept shut, and is he weak enough to explain his reasons for such a desire? Then No 4, of course, has the genuine gratification of leaving it open ten times a day, and so of exercising at once the two functions most dear to the inner snob, of insisting on a right which nobody disputes, and of behaving like one of Janet's donkeys. Real worry, however, worse than all these, is in having a boys' school play-ground adjoining your back premises. What an ill-fated man may be made to suffer in the way of screams and shouts, balls or brick-bats, tricks and practical jokes from a couple of score of boys at a boarding-school, who hand down their spite against him through generations of scholars the time fails us to record. Let our poor correspondents, who complain so often and so grievously, take the consolation of professional comforters: "It might have been worse!" We pity their case; but we can assure them that the aggravations of pianos going at all hours, and of boys exploding gunpowder, are mild evils—ills to which all flesh is heir, when it lives in a town. Let them try what it is to keep a garden, and then see what those young gentlemen will do to their flowers and their favourite tom-cat.

Or would it be possible, on the other hand,

to turn all this article inside out, and that people whom chance or convenience has caused to live unpleasantly near together, should, instead of seeking how to worry each other reciprocally, try whether, by a few concessions and a little consideration, they could not reduce vicinage to each other to the *minimum* of possible annoyance? The experiment would not be altogether unworthy, perhaps, of a nation generally professing the Christian religion, but so anxious to extend the meaning of the word "neighbour" to the inhabitants of Patagonia and Kamtschatka, that they seem to forget the term has a natural sense also; and that if the claims of neighbourhood do not end a mile off, they certainly need not wait to begin till we reach that distance from home.

FRANCES POWER COBBE.

A Plea for the Book of Common Prayer.

BY THE REV. EDGAR I. FRIPP, B.A.

I wish we used some form of the old Prayer Book in all our Churches. I think we would do so if it had not been enforced on our fathers. Such authoritative imposition as accompanied it was enough to make it distasteful, if not hateful, to many lovers of religious freedom; and it is not surprising that the descendants of the ejected clergy and their congregations should be somewhat prejudiced against the old service, and perhaps a little blinded to its extraordinary beauty.

Whatever we may think of the Prayer Book, it is one of the great classics of English literature, the product of a deeply religious and poetic age, and, next to the authorised version of the Bible, the book of religion most dear to the English people. It is, also, *our* inheritance as much as it is that of the Episcopalians. We belong, as closely as they do, to the Protestant reformers and to the good men before them. We have as much right to this old English treasure as anybody, and as much right to adapt it for our use as the revisers of Edward VI., Elizabeth, or Charles II. had to adapt it to theirs.

For its origin indeed, we must go back to the beginnings of English Christianity. Part of the Latin litany chanted by Augustine and his monks on their entry into Canterbury, in the year 597, is still preserved in the English service. Out of several roots the book grew with the growth of religion in England. In various forms, at different stages, it is associated with Baeda and King Aelfred, with Dunstan and Aelfric, Anselm and Roger Bacon, Wiclif, Chaucer, and Sir Thomas More, and it links these men together in a religious sequence. On the *Breviary* or the *Missal*, or the *Prymer*, which were the main components afterwards of the Common Prayer Book, they were spiritually fed, and their lives were to a large extent the outcome of this nourishment.

So far, only the *Prymer*, or Children's Manual of Religion, consisting of the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, was in English. The *Breviary*, the basis of the Daily Service, and the *Missal*, the basis of the Communion Service, were in Latin. But at the Reformation the three, and others, were made *one* book in *English*. They became the PEOPLE'S BOOK OF PRAYER, and every change and addition was framed for this end. It was to be a layman's book as well as a clergyman's book, and a national possession—for the poor labourer who only understood the homely Saxon of his village, as well as for the educated gentry who were accustomed to many words of French and Latin origin.

Let me briefly point this out.

In the preface to the first edition of the book, published in 1549 by King Edward VI., the compilers stated "the firste originall and grounde of common prayers in the Churche, commonlye called divine service", to be "that *the people* should continuallye profite more and more in the knowledge of God, and bee the more inflamed with the love of His true religion"; they complained that the service "these many years hath been read in Latin to the people, whiche they understoode not, so that they have heard with theyr eares onely, and their hartes, spirite, and minde, have not been edified thereby"; and they declared that in future "all thinges shal be read and song in the Churche in the Englishe tongue, to the ende yᵗ the congregacion maie be thereby edified."

The service should begin with the Lord's Prayer uttered by the priest in the "quier," with "a loude voyce," so that *all* should hear. Instead of selected readings, often not from the Bible, in Latin, lessons were commanded from the Bible *only*, in *English*, and, so far as possible, the *whole* Bible was to be read at least once in the year. They were to be read "distinctely with a loude voice that the people maye heare," and the minister who read the lesson was to stand and turn "hym so as he maye beste be hearde of all suche as be present." In larger buildings, as intoning carried farther than reading, "to the ende the people may the better heare," the lessons were to be "songe in a playne tune after the manner of distincte readyng." Thus the "Word of God" was made known to the people and ceased to be the exclusive property of the clergy. And, then, the English of the service was such that it could be *understood* by everyone. "Prayer Book English" is among the finest specimens of our language. It is the strong, homely, musical English of Coverdale, Latimer, and Roger Ascham. It is the English of a time when England was very deeply, truly English and remarkably free from foreign domination. The English of Chaucer is the English of a recent French dominion, and that of Shakespeare shows powerful Latin influence, through the revival of classical culture. But "Prayer Book and Bible English" is the speech of an England which felt in a fresh and forcible way her native genius. The language of the service book—of the Te Deum, the Benedicite, the responses, collects, and prayers—is simply without a parallel, before or since, for strength, sincerity, melody, and clearness. It is supremely the language of English devotion.

Take, as an example of these features, the opening portion of the service which was added in 1552. The sources of this portion are obscure. It is, however, the most original part of the Reformation work; and a very perfect bit of work it is. Observe, first of all, the form of it. It begins with a few solemn sentences of reflection, penitential texts, appropriate for entrance into the House of God and the commencement of worship. The Exhortation follows,—a call to repentance; and then a General Confession,—a confession of unworthiness and sin in deed, thought, and omission. Then comes the pronouncement of God's pardon, and the utterance by minister and people of the Lord's Prayer, full of the comfort of the Gospel. And finally, *after* reflection, repentance, confession, and the sense of God's forgiveness, there is Praise. Not until then are we in the mood to say, "O come let us sing unto the Lord; let us heartily rejoice in the strength of our salvation."* Whoever joins feelingly in this beautiful introduction to the service cannot fail to be carried along by its religious and poetic spirit. And if we are late for this portion, the rest of the service cannot be the same to us as if we had been present.

And now notice the language of this opening section. Take the Exhortation and Confession as they left the pens of the old Protestant compilers:—

"Dearely beloved brethren, the Scripture moveth us in sundry places, to acknowledge and confess our manifold synnes and wickedness, and that we should not dissemble nor cloke them before the face of almighty God our heavenly father, but confess them with an humble, lowely, penitent and obedient heart: to thende that we may obtayn forgeveness of the same by hys infinite goodness and mercie. And although we ought at all times humbly to knowledge our synnes before God: yet ought we most chiefly so to doe, when we assemble and mete together, to rendre thanks for the great benefytes that we have receyved at his hands, to set foorth hys moste worthy prayse, to hear his most holy word, and to aske those things which be requisite and necessarye, as well for the body as the soule. Wherfore I praye and beseche you, as many as be here present, to accompany me wyth a pure heart and humble voyce, unto the throne of the heavenly grace, saying after me:

"Almighty and most mercyfull father, we have erred and strayed from thy wayes, lyke lost shepe. We have folowed too much the devises and desyres of oure owne hearts. We have offended against thy holy lawes. We have left undone those things whiche we oughte to have done, and we have done those thinges which we ought not to have done, and there is no health in us: but thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us miserable offendors. Spare thou them, O God, which confesse theyr faultes. Restore thou them that be penitent, according to thy promyses declared unto mankynde, in Christe Jesu oure Lorde. And graunt, O most merciful father, for his sake, that we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sobre life, to the glory of thy holy name. Amen."

* See Izaak Walton; "Life of George Herbert;" "We begin with confession of ourselves to be vile, miserable sinners; and we begin so, because, till we have confessed ourselves to be such, we are not capable of that mercy which we acknowledge we need and pray for: but, having in the prayer of our Lord, begged pardon for those sins which we have confessed; and hoping, that as the priest hath declared our absolution, so by our public confession and real repentance, we have obtained that pardon; then we dare and do proceed to beg of the Lord, to open our lips, that our mouths may show forth His praise; for till then we are neither able nor worthy to praise Him." Compare this way of beginning Divine service with the bald striking up of a hymn in many Non-conformist places of worship.

The rolling music of these vigorous sentences is not more felt than their manly sincerity. The only touch of artifice in them—the frequent doubling of nouns, verbs and adjectives—is only on the surface. We cannot help noticing "acknowledge and confess," "synnes and wickedness," "dissemble nor cloke," "humble, lowely," "goodness and mercie," "assemble and meet together," "requisite and necessary," "praye and beseche," "erred and strayed," &c. But this is for a purpose. It is to make the meaning of the service as clear as possible to all. The reduplication is not mere tautology. The coupled expressions appeal to different elements in the congregations of the Tudor period. "Confess," "dissemble," "humble," "mercie," "assemble," "requisite," "pray," "err," are words of polite speech in Edward VI's reign, of French-Latin root, in use among the educated; and to these are added or prefixed their homely equivalents, "acknowledge," "goodness," "meet together," "necessary," "beseech," "stray," which, with one exception, are of Old English origin, the language of the common folk. Not only, said the Reformers, shall our service be in English, but in English which high and low shall understand. God's Word is for every one.

The same characteristics are in the Absolution. We observe "power and commandment," "declare and pronounce," "absolution and remission," "pardoneth and absolveth," "pure and holy." God's forgiveness is for *all*, and it is proclaimed in a sturdy, ringing voice.

Now, very slight changes would make this opening portion of the service,—the special addition of the reformers,—suitable for modern Protestant use. The Exhortation, though nearly 350 years old, needs no amendment. It appeals to us as it did to Sidney, Spenser, Shakespeare, Hooker, and George Herbert; and it has the added sacredness of having been heard and listened to by these and many thousands of great and good men. The Confession is even more sacred for those who have *joined* in it. A few words such as "and there is no health in us," and "miserable offendors," which are perhaps too strong for continual public use, might be omitted; and perhaps some modification might be desired in the clause "according to thy promyses declared unto mankynde in Christe Jesu oure Lorde." I would, also, leave out "for his sake" in the closing petition. But the remainder surely stands, a noble and beautiful congregational prayer, hallowed by usage among generations of worshippers.

The Absolution presents difficulties. There is something priestly in the idea of absolution, though perhaps in the pronouncement itself there is little to find fault with. God Himself is the only absolver of sin, and He forgives without the intervention of a minister. The Absolution then might be turned into a prayer, as follows:—

"Almighty God, who desirest not the death of a sinner, but rather that he may turn from his wickedness and live*; and hast promised to thy people being penitent, the forgiveness and remission of their sins; grant to us true repentance, and Thy Holy Spirit, that those things may please Thee which we do at this present; and that the rest of our life hereafter may be pure and holy; so that at the last we may come to Thy eternal joy. Amen."

With these changes the use of only the opening portion of the service would unite us closer to Christendom, and make us feel that we also belong to a glorious past.

* "Thy brother was dead, and is alive again."—Luke xv. 32.

The least of God's works is worthy the observation of the greatest angel.

Read to learn, learn to practice, practice to live, and live to praise God for ever.

The Seed Sower;

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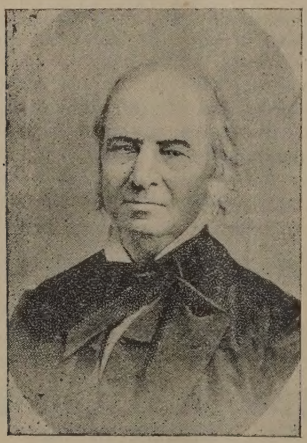
Authentic Interviews.

V.—ORVILLE DEWEY, D.D.

NEW YORK,
February, 1849.

An announcement has gone forth that, through increasing ill-health, Dr. Dewey has felt compelled to terminate his Church of the Messiah pastorate. There will be wide-spread regret at this severance and its cause. For the past thirteen years he has been one of the leading figures in the social and educational life of the city, and attentive hundreds have



hung upon his words every Sunday. As he is fifty-five only, we express the strong hope, which all will share, that a prolonged rest may sufficiently restore his powers to bring him back to the pulpit, of which he has been so great an adornment.

In the meantime, we have sought to glean a few facts and first-hand opinions from Dr. Dewey's rich experience.

"Can you recall your earliest notions of religion?"

"My early impressions on that subject could not be happy or winning. I remember the time when I really feared that if I went out into the fields to walk on Sunday, bears would come down from the mountain and catch me. At a later day, but still in my childhood, I recollect a book-pedlar's coming to our house, and when he opened his pack, that I selected, from a pile of story-books, Bunyan's 'Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners.' Religion had a sort of horrible attraction for me, but nothing could exceed its gloominess."

"Then your childhood was hardly happy?"

"So far as my experience goes, the ordinary poetic representations of the happiness of that period, as compared with after-life, are not true, and I must doubt whether they ought to be true. Instead of looking back to childhood as the blissful period of my life, I find that I have been growing happier every year. Truth, art, religion—the true, the beautiful, the divine—have constantly risen clearer and brighter before me, and I have every day grown a happier man."

"Did this happiness commence with your college days?"

"Two events in my college life were of great moment to me,—the loss of sight, and the gain, if I may so, of insight. In my junior year, my eyes became so weak that I could not use them more than an hour a day, and I was obliged to rely mainly upon others for the prosecution of my studies during the remainder of my college course. I hardly know now whether to be glad or sorry for this deprivation. I was compelled to think, as I should not otherwise have done."

"What of the other event?"

"The other event was of a far different character. Religion had never been a delight to me before: now it became the highest. A new day rose upon me; and that day has gone on brightening to the present hour. I have known other joys; I have known art and beauty, music and gladness; I have known friendship and love and family ties; but it is certain that till we see God in the world—God in the bright and boundless universe—we never know the highest joy."

"Did you then feel that you had a call?"

"I felt as if the life of a minister of religion were the only sacred, the only religious life. But what especially moved me to embrace it was a desire to vindicate for religion its rightful claim and place in the world; to roll off the

cloud and darkness that lay upon it, and to show it in its true light. I burned with a desire that others should see it. This 'divine call' I had, whether or not it answers to what is commonly meant by that phrase."

"But you must have had doubts concerning orthodox doctrines?"

"I certainly was desirous of finding the orthodox system true. But the more I studied it, the more I doubted. I doubted the doctrine of the personality of the Holy Spirit. The more I believed in the doctrine of literally eternal punishment, the more I doubted it."

"And the Trinity?"

"I spent a year in examining especially the Trinity. I read Emlyn's "Humble Inquiry," Yates and Wardlaw, Channing and Worcester, besides other books; but especially I made the most thorough examination I was able of all the texts in both Testaments that appeared to bear upon the subject. The result was an undoubting rejection of the doctrine of the Trinity."

"To deny the Trinity is to incure censure and penalty."

"I soon had practical demonstration of this, not only in the coldness and the withdrawal of friends, but in the summons of the Presbytery of the City of New York, from which I had taken out my license to preach, to appear before it and answer to the charge of heresy. The summons was made in terms at war, I thought, with Christian liberty, and I refused to obey it."

"So you had to leave the Presbyterians. What was your next course?"

"I went up to Boston to assist Dr. Channing in his duties as pastor of the Federal Street Church."

"What was your first impression of Channing?"

"Channing was not a genial person. He was too intent upon the subjects that occupied his mind for that sympathetic adjustment of his thoughts to the moods of people around him which makes the agreeable person. It would have been better for him if he had had more variety, ease, and joyousness in society, and he felt it himself."

"Where was your next charge?"

"In the autumn of 1823, on Dr. Channing's return to his pulpit, I went to New Bedford to preach to the Congregational Church, formerly Dr. West's, was invited to be its pastor, and was ordained to that charge on the 17th of December, Dr. Tuckerman giving the sermon."

"On what date did you come to New York?"

"I was installed on the 8th November, 1835, Dr. Walker preaching the sermon. On Sunday morning, the 26th November, 1837, the church was burned to the ground. Nothing was saved but my library, which was flung out of the vestry window, and the pulpit Bible, which I possess—a present from the trustees. The congregation immedately directed its thoughts to a new church, and determined to build on Broadway. The building was completed in something more than a year, and on the 2nd May, 1839, it was dedicated under the name of the Church of the Messiah."

"You, doubtless, had a reason for this designation?"

"It was a strong desire with me that the church should have some permanent name, some fixed designation, and so pass down, gathering about it the sacred associations of years and ages to come."

"Did you introduce any other changes?"

"Another wish of mine was to enter the new church with the liturgy of King's Chapel in Boston for our form of service, but it was not introduced, and I am now glad that it was not. For while I am as much satisfied as ever of the great utility of a liturgy, I have become equally convinced that original, spontaneous prayer is likely to open the preacher's heart in a way very important to his own ministration and to the edification of the people. The best service, I think, should consist of both."

"What is your opinion of preaching?"

"There is a great deal too much of preaching—such as it is—too much for the preacher, and too much for the people. The world is in danger of being preached out of all hearty and spontaneous religion. What would you think, if the love of parents and children were made the subject of a weekly lecture in the family, and of such lecture as the ordinary preaching is? Oh! if a St. Chrysostom, or even a St. Cesarius, or a Robert Hall could come along and speak to us once in half a year, they would leave,

perhaps, a deeper imprint than this perpetual and petrifying drop-dropping of the sanctuary."

"Have you yourself acted upon this conviction?"

"At New Bedford I preached every sermon I had, that was worth preaching, five times over. I can't remember the time when I have written twenty-five sermons in a year."

"You have given your opinion on the liturgy question and on preaching. What are your views about pastoral calls and sick visiting?"

"The great trial of our calling is the wrenching, the agonising of sympathy with affliction, and the essential moral incongruity of such relations. Nobody but an intimate friend has any business in a house of deep affliction. To come there, or to the desolate mourner, in an official capacity, is in painful conflict with my ideas of the simple relations of man with man. I sometimes doubt whether the general ministrations of the pulpit should not suffice, leaving the application to the hearer in this case as in others; whether the minister's relations in distress and suffering should not be like every other man's; whether, if there were nothing conventional or customary about this matter, most families would not prefer to be left to themselves, without a professional call from their minister. I am sure I should prefer it, if I were a parishioner."

"Then this part at least of your work, Dr. Dewey, you will lay down not unwillingly?"

"I will be so frank as to say that it is a great moral relief to me to lay down the burden of the parochial charge. I regret to leave New York. I could have wished to live and die among my friends here; but this particular relation to society—no man, it seems to me, can enter into it heartily without feeling it to weigh upon him heavily. To take into one's heart, more or less, the personal and domestic sorrows of two or three hundred families is a burden of which no man who has not borne it can conceive."

It will be fully admitted at once that in the matter of preaching, at least, no one is more entitled to speak and be heard than Dr. Dewey himself. He has raised "practical preaching" from a vain and shallow thing to an elevating, inspiring, commanding theme. He has turned the pulpit into a throne, and been recognised as a king. He has made the Church of the Messiah a centre of truth and light during his thirteen years' ministry in New York city. He has numbered amongst his intimate friends the choicest spirits of our race, from Dr. Channing and Henry Ware to Dr. Bellows and Robert Collyer. We wish him, once more, a well-earned rest from his labour, and a return, in due time, to his rightful and useful sphere.

Garnered Sunshine.

These early autumn days have a peculiar charm all their own. Almost all the birds have ceased to sing; the busy hum of summer's multitudinous life has languished, and finally died away; the Earth is brooding over her perfected harvests, murmuring the while a dreamy lullaby which cannot be attuned to our measured words. As I walk to-day between dusty hedgerows along a white glare of sunlit highway leading to the harvest-fields, I can hear the sound of the reaping-machine on every side. It is a moaning sound, and seems to presage the autumn winds. But there is no wind, no cooling breeze to-day; the air is sultry, and so very still that the spinning vibrations caused by the wings of unfortunate flies, entangled in the glistening festoons of the spiders' webs, is distinctly audible. An ominous dark-blue cloud with a lurid electric light in its centre is coming up from the north. We shall have thunder ere long, although the basking sunshine still slants upon the mellow fields of golden grain, flecked with scarlet poppies. Tremulous movements in the hedges betray the presence of the silent birds; but a restless bullfinch flits before me, hurriedly pausing to whistle his abruptly terminating song; and a landrail sends his monotonous 'Crake, crake!' over a distant clover field. I wonder if the landrail is a ventriloquist? Certainly, he is oftener heard than seen.

I follow the road past an old farmhouse, and immediately strike into a wheat-field in which the reapers are busy. A row of standing stooks redolent with the narcotic scent of withering poppies fringes the half uncut grain, and under one of these I rest awhile. How unswervingly,

how regularly does the reaping-machine cut down the proud ranks of grain ; how swiftly do the stooping reapers follow behind, binding the swaths into sheaves, and arranging them with picturesque precision at intervals along the crackling stubble. One could fancy that the sunshine of the summer had not fled after all, but had taken tangible form in this field of golden wheat. It is more than harvested grain, for it is garnered sunshine: summer is imprisoned in the sunny wheat. The sparrows which I have missed from the woodlands are here in chirping flocks; cheeriest of gleaners, how they revel among the stubble. I, too, will pluck a gleaner's handful of the embodied sunshine, to brighten my wall at home when the firelight flickers, and the snow taps at the windows with soft, treacherous fingers.

On a day like this, one envies the farmer and his men their close proximity to Nature. True, they wait upon her to further their own ends, and they must be ever at her beck and call; but think of the band of aërial forces she sends to aid the farmer in his toil! The sun, the wind, the rain, the moon, the dew—these are the willing spirits he tethers to his ploughshare. He is at once their slave and their master. He must do their bidding if he would guide those sovereign forces to help him to win the harvest of the earth. Do they tarry in their coming? Then must the farmer be patient, and not in haste. He must work late or early ; he must hurry or he must pause as his omnipotent servants decree. They will only serve him if he walks in the inflexible grooves of their natural laws ; then only will the farmer prosper.

In the next field the thrashing machine is at work, and women are engaged in filling their mattresses with the fresh light chaff. The hedge which separates the two fields is brilliant with the polished scarlet fruit of the dog-rose, and with many-coloured bramble sprays laden with berries in every stage of ripening, from the first faint blush of red to the luscious purple bloom of complete fruition. The thistle-down is floating like fairy shuttlecocks on the still air; and with every darting movement of the birds in the hedges, the ripe thistle-heads are shaken free of their buoyant winged seeds. The umbelliferous plants have lost their crowns of white florets and are now seeding. They are an ambitious race, and are not content with their five feet of summer growth, but must needs hurry after the departing summer with awkward lengths of useless stalk and sickly flower-umbels which will never reach perfection. These unsightly late sprouts are the hasty after-thoughts and parenthesis of an over-prolific parent stem, and are destined to be overtaken and killed by the early frosts. The foliage of the lowly herb Robert brightens the dusty grass beneath the hedges, sending a crimson wandering fire along the verdant line that fringes the sun-baked highway ; and the camomile flower with its feathery foliage has supplanted the ox-eyed daisy.

I have almost trodden upon a quaint little ball of withered grass blades deftly and compactly plaited together and fastened to some ears of cut wheat. This I am told by a reaper is the tiny nest of a field-mouse. As far as I can see, there is no apparent ingress or egress ; it is merely a round soft ball. A quaint and wonderful piece of architecture it seems to my astonished eyes, especially when I learn that these tiny homes sometimes contain seven young mice. I also find and carry off as a treasure a deserted linnet's nest. It was placed in the bushy hollow of a hawthorn hedge ; and so beautifully dainty is it in structure and in colour, that I may be pardoned the passing thought that birds may possibly possess more or less of an artistic feeling for colour and form.

But now the portentous calm of the afternoon is broken by a distant muttering of thunder. The cloud was nearer, or has travelled quicker than I reckoned upon ; the birds leave the stubble and fly low, hastening to their leafy coverts ; and I make my way to the shelter of the ancient doorway of the farmhouse and there stand watching the gathering storm. The sun has disappeared behind the rising sullen blue clouds, and swift, with a heavy pattering fall, the big raindrops strike the hissing dust. There is a flash of zig-zag lightning, followed by a peal of thunder that cracks overhead as if the sky was rending. Faster falls the rain in a deluge of plashing water. How quick the dust licks up the welcome torrent! Again and yet again the lightning flashes and the thunder growls ; but the cloud is very local, and gradually it moves across the sky, carrying with it a

last peal of thunder, which dies in the distance just as the azure sky escapes once more from the ragged edge of the retreating cloud. Once more the sun shines forth through still falling rain, and lo! a gorgeous rainbow flings its arching span against the dark cloud, and shines with sevenfold radiance in the face of the golden sun. Upward rises a lark from a gleaming wet clover-field, singing as he climbs into the sunny air. See how white his sun-flecked breast looks against the thunder-cloud! Now he has reached the centre of the rainbow arch, and there he hangs, as if suspended by an invisible thread, singing in an ecstasy of joy.

I issue from my shelter and turn homeward; but the hedges are indistinct, and the road almost lost within a fragrant mist of incense sent up by the grateful earth. Gradually the warm vapour is absorbed by the strong sun; the delicious odour of earth fills the air, and mingles with the clammy sweetness of a hidden honeysuckle. I walk upon enchanted ground, picking my steps among pools of water which look like broken fragments of the rainbow overhead, and fallen sapphires from the blue. My path is radiant with jewels; for the raindrops that twinkle on hedgerow and grass have become emeralds and rubies and flashing diamonds by the magic power of the sun.

Tennyson as Patriot.

It is his deep, eloquent, unfaltering patriotism which makes Tennyson in many ways the most typical of English poets. He rejoices in everything English with an ardour which, expressed in flawless language, communicates itself irresistibly to all who read him. His heart is full of England, of the mythical glories of her past, of the more certain records of her history, of the splendour of her warriors, of the quiet beauty of her homes, of her government, her character, her freedom. To him Arthur appeals as the hero of her earliest traditions, Harold as one of her bravest kings, Becket as one of her most indomitable statesmen. Poems like "The Charge of the Light Brigade" and "The Defence of Lucknow" breathe, of course, this patriotic spirit in its most stirring form; but again and again, sometimes less successfully and sometimes more, the poet returns to harp upon this theme, the noble deeds and noble obligations of the country which he passionately loves. His sense of art and inborn taste prevent this glowing patriotism from degenerating into mere jingo bombast. Behind this pride in English glory there lies, we feel—and we are not suffered to forget it—a deep sense of English duty too. The England he idealises he would render worthy of devotion. The past which he idealises he does not slavishly adore. Typically English as he is, with the love of English life ingrained in him—so that even among grand themes of war and of romance his fancy turns back, and by some touch he recalls us to the tranquil sights and scenes, to the meadows and orchards, to the thatched roofs and clean-clipped hedges of the country side—he can admire the past, and yet advance to meet the future undismayed, he can appreciate the graces and the possibilities of rank while he sweeps insolent pretence aside. Much of his hold on English minds Tennyson owes to the fact that, like most Englishmen and unlike most poets, he is at heart a politician, and a singularly sane politician too. His sense of balance and moderation, which come out most clearly when he refers to English institutions, make him specially representative of the best type of English mind. He loves England because she is the home of freedom. But he loves her also because, alone among the nations, she seems to understand what freedom means—

> "That sober freedom out of which there springs
> Our loyal passion for our temperate kings."

In the magnificent vision of Freedom which prefaces the stirring lines "Love thou thy land," the poet pictures the goddess as—

> "Turning to scorn with lips divine
> The falsehood of extremes,"

and this, the wisdom of the middle course, he chaunts unceasingly through life. He hates alike the "lawless crown" and the "lawless crowd." He is ever protesting, more often perhaps than a man who had mingled much with practical affairs would see cause for protesting against the demagogues' "tempestuous tongues." Like all men divorced from actual politics, he was apt, more lately in

particular, to exaggerate the influence on his countrymen of these

"Brass mouths and iron lungs."

More and more emphatically, as years went by, he would repeat his warning against the dangers of too rapid progress, against the abuses to which freedom, misunderstood and misapplied, might lead. But in this cautious conservatism he spoke for his race. And hand in hand with this conservatism went a grand ideal of freedom, of a free people daring all for the principles they loved, which in this day of timid policies and of paltering with our obligations it will do Englishmen no harm to recall. Tennyson, indeed, combined many of the qualities which have made a few rare English statesmen great, and he possessed the gift of expressing them in language that no statesman has ever yet been able to command. An intense belief in his own countrymen and in the power and resources of the country, an intense sympathy with those homely instincts which all true Englishmen possess, an inborn love of the daily sights and scenes of English life, a strong moral conviction of the claims of duty, a courageous, high-souled independence which no dangers will silence, no tyranny can crush, and a firm belief in the efficacy of a manly and unflinching moderation —these are the qualities which ring all through his poetry, and they are the qualities which in their leaders the English people most admire. It is because he shared them in such ample measure, and gave voice to them in such noble words, that Tennyson's verse will ever stand out, like his beacon, as a guiding star to Englishmen.

If we do not live down error, I am sure we shall never dispute it down.

Dawn deepens into day; spring ripens into summer; brooks swell into rivers, and rivers broaden towards the ocean; buds nourish blossoms, and blossoms fruit; saplings grow into trees, children into men, individuals into nations. So in the soul the knowledge of God is ever enlarging and increasing. What is small at first becomes deeper and wider. The highest attainments of one stage are the alphabet of the next.

A Song of Sunbeams.

Oh, lovely sunbeams through the meadows dancing
On golden pinions all the livelong day,
Kissing young leaves, on crystal streamlets glancing,
Changing to living gold their silver spray;
Wee amorous elves, coquetting with the roses,
Wooing the daisy in her grassy bed
Till the shy flower unconsciously uncloses
Her dew-gemmed leaves, and blushes rosy red.

Gilding gray rocks, on rugged mountains streaming,
Bidding the flowers in sheltered nooks awake,
Calling young song-birds from their happy dreaming,
Waking the laughter of the dimpling lake;
Playing "Bo-peep" amid the white buds blowing
In pearly clusters on the hawthorn tree,
To the round eyes of wondering childhood showing
The rapid journeyings of the wandering bee!

Shedding a halo bright on youthful tresses,
Bidding young hearts for very rapture sing,
Touching the brow of care with kind caresses,
Or glinting lightly on the skylark's wing.
Ah, merry sunbeams, like sly Cupids straying
In the glad footsteps of the rustic lass,
On sun-tanned cheek and snow-white kerchief playing,
Twinkling like fireflies in the emerald grass!

Oh, lovely sunbeams, like blest angels gliding
Through courts of squalor, sickness, want, and gloom,
Telling of clouds like golden chariots riding
Proudly majestic o'er a world of bloom!
Of winding lanes, and milk-white homesteads peeping
Like modest virgins from secluded bowers;
Of shallow pools, and baby streamlets leaping
In giddy gladness 'neath down-drooping flowers.

On the poor children playing in the gutter,
Nursed amid hardship, bitter tears, and sighs,
Kissing their rags like loving friends ye flutter,
Warming their limbs, and sparkling in their eyes!
When from the dust they raise their beaming faces,
Once pinched and wan, now radiant with delight,
Ye love to show a thousand fairy graces
That want and squalor have no power to blight.

Dance, lovely sunbeams, through fair country meadows,
Bathe hall and cottage in your holy light,
From city slums go chase the mournful shadows
That fill poor homesteads with eternal night.
To those who pine in ignorance and sorrow,
May all your tenderest, holiest gifts be given,
That sorrowing hearts one ray of hope may borrow
In the sweet knowledge that ye come from heaven.

If we could read the secret history of our enemies, we should find in each man's life sorrow and suffering enough to disarm all our hostility.

THE CHILDREN'S PAGE.

The Oyster and the Pearl.

There was once an oyster who lived on an oyster-bed. He had a great many companions of his kind, but they did not speak to each other much, for oysters usually keep themselves to themselves a good deal. One fine day the oyster opened his shell for a little salt water, and to enjoy the sunbeams that came through the green water from overhead. It was a quiet part where he lived, but there were a good many creatures about this morning, and our oyster found it amusing to watch them. An old lobster came shuffling through the sand who wished him "good day;" then some whiting passed overhead, their scales glancing in the sun; then a mother crab waddled by, trying to teach her children to walk; next a dispute arose between two oysters about whether the sunbeams made the water shine, or whether the water made the sunbeams shine, until a mass of seaweed floated over them and stopped them, when, suddenly—swish! a whole shoal of shrimps and small fish came by, followed by a large hungry fish with wide open mouth. It was quite exciting!

As he was watching these things our oyster heard a small voice say, "Oh, I am so ugly and shapeless. I don't know what to do to make myself look nice!" and looking round he saw a little lump of gritty sand lying near him.

"What is the matter?" he said kindly.

"Oh, don't you see how ugly I am?" said the little lump. "I can't please anyone, and it makes me so unhappy."

"Never mind," said the oyster, "I'll make you all right if you'll come into my house."

So the little lump went inside his shell, and the oyster wrought such a wonderful change in her that one day, when he opened his shell there she was, smooth, round, and beautiful, and of a gleaming whiteness that still had many tints in it—a regular pearl!

Well, after a time the oyster was fished up and the pearl taken out. She was put in the centre of a gold ring, and soon adorned the hand of a pretty young lady; but she never forgot to think gratefully of the oyster who had made her what she was.—BEATRICE CRANE.

A Song of the Sea.

Upon the rocks of grey,
Beside the pearly foam,
The children love to play,
And o'er the sands to roam,—
The golden sands so fair and wide,
Kissed by the white spray of the tide.

Beneath the summer light
The smiling wavelets lie,
The shores are shining bright,
Where restless sea-birds fly;
And in the tide, with naked feet,
Play at the morn the children sweet.

I wonder do they hear—
The wee ones in their glee—
The anthem high and clear,
That rings from out the sea;
I wonder do the children know
That wavelets sing the while they flow.

And this is what they say,
"Be glad, O little heart;
God rules the waves for aye—
His power shall ne'er depart;
He is so strong for thee to care,
Thy little life His love doth share.

"The sea obeys His will
Whose help is ever nigh;
He breatheth, '*Peace, be still*,'
And storms to stillness die;
And He who reigns by shore, by sea,
Shall still thy tender Shepherd be."

MARGARET HAYCRAFT.

The Castle Builders.

Building castles all the day,
Are you never weary say,
Children by the sea?
Though the sun is sinking fast,
Still another! This the last
Then indeed must be!

Build it strong, and build it steep,
Print the doors and windows deep,
Plant a garden round;
Border it with stones of white,
Trees and flowers of seaweed bright
These shall deck the ground.

When it rises proud and high,
From the top a flag shall fly—
Who can lend one there?
Stay, what need for all this pains,
When to-morrow nought remains
Of our castle fair?

Hear the wild waves what they sing,
Hear the red sun whispering,
As he sinks to rest:
"Whether at your work or play,
Little people, come what may,
Always do your best!"

ELLIS WALTON.